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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of regular, one-to-one conversations with a native speakers of English on the writing skills of English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) college students. The subjects, three undergraduate students (ages 18 to 23) in the ESL program of a small college, participated in standard conversational English with a native speaker, and the effects of this interaction were observed. Results did not yield conclusive evidence that such conversations caused improvement in the students' writing; however, several other patterns did emerge. The areas in which the students failed to make progress in both writing and speaking were remarkably similar to one another. While not defining the nature of the link between speaking and writing, the study suggests that such a link exists, implying an important or even essential role for native-speaker conversation in college-level ESL programs. Contains 16 references. (MSE)

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THE EFFECTS OF REGULAR EXPOSURE TO AND PARTICIPATION IN STANDARD CONVERSATIONAL ENGLISH ON THE WRITING OF COLLEGE-AGED ESL STUDENTS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

DR. LINDA BEST

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

KEAN COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF

MASTER OF ARTS

BY

THOMAS W. SIRINIDES

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Finally, I cannot end without offering my deepest thanks to Jesus Christ, who by His patient work in my life continually blesses me far beyond all I could ask or imagine.

Abstract

The relationship between speaking and writing has many implications for English as a Second Language (ESL) Education. Numerous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of writing as a means to help develop conversational ability (McGrath 1992, Staton 1983), far fewer have examined the impact of the reverse scenario. While the effectiveness of English language conversation groups in fostering written skills has been documented (Haas and Smoke 1990), no research has studied the effect of one-to-one conversation on writing. This paper examines that effect. Three undergraduate college students, ages 18 to 23, from the ESL Program at a small comprehensive college in the Northeastern United States were exposed to and participated in standard conversational English with a native English speaker. The effect of this contact on their academic writing was observed. Results did not yield conclusive evidence that such conversations caused improvement in the students' writing; however, several other patterns did emerge. Parallel occurrences were found between the writing and the speech of the students: i.e., the areas in which they made or failed to make progress in both speech and writing were remarkably similar to one another. While not defining the nature of the linkage between speaking and writing, this study does demonstrate that such a linkage exists. The reality of this interconnection implies an important or even essential role for native-speaker conversation in college-level ESL programs.

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Introduction

What is the relationship between spoken and written language? Instructors in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) have repeatedly examined this question, as have researchers in many related branches of education. In their research, Britton, Burgess, Martin, McCleod, and Rosen (1975) looked at "how a child gathers his resources from speech and uses them in the course of moving into the written language," noting that "[the] writing of young children is often very like written down speech." (pp. 11, 16) Similarly, in his study of oral and written relationships, Cambourne (1981) noted that "the successful reader learns to process print in almost the same way that speech is processed." (p. 96) Cook-Gumperz and Gumperz (1981) in their research on the development of writing skills in children noted, "children need a saturation experience of orally transformed 'written prose' in as many culturally 'neutral' ways as possible . . . in order to transform, for themselves, the rhythms of spoken language into the written modes." (p. 108)

Nevertheless, the interrelated nature of written and oral skills is not always clear, there are, in fact, notable differences between the two. In their research, Britton et al. described a number of distinct differences between speaking and writing. For example, "writing is solitary, premeditated, and a sustained act of imagination, there is no direct listener and no contemporaneous feed-back as in speech. Something has constantly to be envisaged and a flow of words kept going." (p. 11) Yet even on a more mundane level, the divergent nature of conversational and written language learning can be seen. Spoken English is an oral activity whereas writing is not. Grammatical rules and features when taught are frequently described as being "acceptable for informal speech only" or "typical of writing only." Even during the placement testing that is common at the start of any ESL class term, it is not unusual to encounter a student whose conversational English is quite good but whose writing is not. Similarly, many a novice ESL instructor has been startled by the realization that the student who produced such wonderful work in his or her writing class last term is now a somewhat below average member of this term's conversational English class.

In spite of all these differences, however, there remains the sense that speaking and writing are uniquely related. Both are language-productive activities. Both spring from the same source, the desire of human beings to communicate to others the thoughts and feelings that reside within them. So the question remains, does development of spoken English ability enhance written ability? Does what occurs in casual speech have a clear or noticeable impact on what a student writes on the pages of an examination "blue book"?

That is the essence of the topic that this research will explore. The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between conversational English and English writing skills. Specifically, it investigated the effects of regular exposure to and participation in standard conversational English on the English writing ability of 18-23 year old undergraduate college ESL students. The participants in this research project were students at a small comprehensive college in the Northeastern United States. They were, in many ways, typical of a certain ESL student population: recent immigrants, arriving in the United States with their families, and seeking to live out "the American dream" by simultaneously learning English, going to work and studying at college. For such exceedingly busy students, conversational English practice might seem like a luxury to be dispensed with. For many other foreign students, conversations with a native English speaker are more likely viewed as rare or unavailable. Many international students live in "academic ghettos," cut off from meaningful contact with the mainstream American world. Even ESL programs, in making the development of writing skills their primary objective (since writing ability is utterly essential to academic success in the American University system), sometimes neglect to encourage or even to provide real English-language conversational opportunities to their students.

This research project sought to examine the question of whether or not ESL students would be helped in the development of their writing abilities by engaging in conversations with a native English speaker. If such a benefit exists, then native-speaker conversation becomes a more important element to be considered in the development and execution of a college ESL

curriculum. If the benefit is found to be of dramatic proportions, then incorporating native-language conversation into the college ESL curriculum becomes essential.

Literature Review

Much has been written about the interrelated nature of the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking and writing, the two "productive" skills, have frequently been compared, the necessity of producing some sample of language being seen as a crucial common factor between them. Britton, Burgess, Martin, McCleod and Rosen (1975) in examining the ways in which children learn to write found strong parallels between the spoken patterns of children and their written work. They noted that the "writing of young children is often very like written down speech." (p. 16) Ernst and Richard (1994) in studying the development of writing ability among pre- and early-literate ESL children noted similar connections between children's speech and the writing they produced. They found that "writing arises from and relates to [children's] current ongoing interests as children talk. . ." and otherwise interact with the world around them. (Ernst & Richard, p. 325) All of this confirms the reality of a connection between spoken and written language.

Because of this linkage, ESL instructors have at times sought to use writing as a tool to develop speaking skills among their students. An example of this is the dialogue journal. In such a journal, students write on any topic they choose, the instructor offering a written reply, not to correct students' grammar but rather to respond to students' ideas. (Lamb & Best 1990) Such interaction provides students with a low-pressure environment in which to produce English language. "Dialogue journals aid in ESL instruction by providing students with a non-threatening, comfortable environment in which to write. . . . Dialogue journals help students learn about writing without apprehension." (Lamb & Best, p. 9) Such a low-anxiety setting is essential to the acquisition of language, since concern over linguistic performance can raise a language learner's "affective filter" (his or her resistance to acquiring a language) and thus hinder the language acquisition process. (Krashen & Terrell 1983)

The dialogue journal was originally employed as a means for helping ESL students to improve their writing (Staton 1983; Lamb & Best), however, it has since come to be recognized as an aid for improving speaking, as well. (McGrath 1992) Dialogue journals allow students to

converse with their teachers in a written form. "[D]ialogue journal writing is the form of writing which most closely approximates conversation. . . . [Its] turn-taking characteristic is what likens dialogue journals most to conversation." (22-23) Staton (1983) states that "[in] the dialogue journal, both students and teacher are free to use the full range of language functions characteristic of face-to-face conversation, including questions, complaints, promises, denials and apologies." (pp. 2-3) Because of this, "the dialogue journal can prepare students for later oral communication." (McGrath, p. 4)

Just as young children have been found to write in ways that parallel their normal speech, and ESL students have been demonstrated to become better conversationalists through the regular use of the dialogue journal, it has been found that participation in target language conversation can be an aid to the development of writing skills in ESL students. The interactive nature of conversations allows the speaker to provide "comprehensible input" to the language learner (the so called "i+1" of Krashen and Terrell)--speech that is slightly beyond their current level of ability, but not so far beyond as to be incomprehensible to them. "[L]earners assimilate best those forms which fit their interlanguage grammar or are perhaps one stage ahead of their developing grammar. . . . Other forms are not processed because the learners' grammar cannot encompass them." (Chaudron 1983, p. 438) In a verbal dialogue, input can be modified in response to the ESL listener's ability or failure to comprehend the intended message. As Britton et al. (1975) have described it, a speaker does not "need to be particularly explicit until he finds his listener does not understand or accept what has been said. Then the demands of the situation will cause the speaker to become more explicit, possibly more formal, and thereby edit out some of the expressive features of his utterances in order to communicate more fully." (p. 11) Chaudron points out that "[m]ost researchers refer to modifications that are presumed to aid comprehension as simplification . . . . [but the] final test of what can be considered simplification of input for comprehensibility is perhaps the operational measure of what form is most efficiently processed and retained as linguistic or pragmatic information." (p. 439) Conversation provides both the speaker and the listener with continuous verbal and non-verbal feedback. It thus affords

the ESL learner a rich opportunity both to hear and understand and also to produce and correct the target language immediately, all done in a real-life, meaning-filled setting.

Taylor (1983) describes "the importance of providing language learners with more opportunities to interact directly with the target language--to acquire it by using it rather than to learn it by studying it." (p. 70) He continues that "for most students language is best acquired when it is not studied in a direct or explicit way; it is acquired most effectively when it is used as a vehicle for doing something else. . . ." (71) Numerous studies have demonstrated that using a second language for real communicative purposes will facilitate the acquisition of that language (e.g., Widdowson, 1978; Krashen, 1981; Taylor, 1983; Savignon, 1983). Yet Myers and Bernstein (1988) have demonstrated that "naturally occurring dialogues differ considerably from dialogues found in most TESOL books." (p. 373) This difference from real communication presumably has a markedly negative impact on the efficacy of such textbook exercises for language acquisition.

There is thus a need for students learning a language to be engaged in real-life dialogues. Nevertheless, many such students are hesitant to use their new language in authentic ways. Vann (1981) has stated that "students need techniques which help them overcome their inhibitions about using the language for expression," particularly in light of the relationship he observed between their abilities to speak and to write. (p. 166) The relaxed setting of natural conversation can provide such a circumstance in which students use the language, becoming more at ease with it and ultimately experiencing growth in both oral and written fluency.

A relaxed atmosphere such as this was found in the informal "conversation study groups" examined by Haas and Smoke. (1990) In their work, they looked at the role of conversation as an aid to the development of writing ability among college-aged ESL learners. Their research showed that regular engagement in such small groups for discussion resulted in dramatic improvement in the participants' classroom writing. (Haas & Smoke) The conversation groups they described provided low-pressure settings conducive to language acquisition. (Haas & Smoke, Krashen & Terrell) These were group discussions and were focused to some extent

around classroom related topics. The remarkable success of these spoken experiences in producing increased written ability raises questions: What impact would individual conversation have on ESL students' writing? How would less academically-focused conversations impact students' written work?

It is these questions which established the foundation for this study. By engaging students in informal conversation and looking at samples of their academic writing, the researcher attempted to answer the question: What will be the effects of regular exposure to and participation in standard conversational English on the English writing ability of 18-23 year old undergraduate college ESL students? Little writing has been done on this aspect of the relationship between speaking and writing; this lack of research-based literature supports the need to explore this topic further.

Study Design

This research project involved traditionally-aged college students (i.e., 18 to 23 years of age) in the ESL Program at a small comprehensive college in the Northeastern United States. It examined the effects of regular exposure to and participation in standard conversational English on the writing of these students. The researcher chose to study students from this college because of the convenience of the school's location and also because of the willingness of the college's ESL Program Director and instructors to participate in this project. The researcher preferred to work with subjects who had been in the United States for at least six months, but not more than two years on the expectation that this would yield students who had already passed through the initial phases of culture shock, but whose English language skills had not yet become fossilized.

Recruitment.

The initial steps of recruitment involved contacting the ESL Program at the selected college. The enrollment at this college is more than 14,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The ESL Program had 541 students enrolled for the Fall Semester 1996. Sixty-nine percent of these students were Hispanic; 43% graduated from U.S. high schools. Students are placed in one of four levels, with successful completion of the fourth level satisfying the college's freshman English requirement. (See Appendices A and B for copies of the college's ESL Program information sheets.) Once the researcher had obtained the ESL Program Director's approval, he contacted teachers from the Program's fall semester ESL classes (level two of four), asking them to recommend possible students for this project. (See Appendix C for copies of this correspondence.) The researcher gave these instructors the following two basic criteria to consider: current writing ability at Level-Two (i.e., successful completion of the course, with advancement to ESL Level Three of four); and probable willingness to take part in such a project. He asked them to screen for these criteria at the end of the fall semester, or early in the winter break. In the event that instructors had not submitted enough names to him by early January, the researcher planned to send a brief memo to the fall semester ESL Level-Two teachers asking

them again for the names of any students they might recommend. If additional names were still needed, the researcher planned to contact the Bilingual Counselor for the College's ESL Program, asking her for some additional student references.

Selection.

Once the researcher gathered a list of names, he planned to screen the potential participants further before the start of the spring semester. The criteria used in this second screening were for the students to have been in the United States for between one semester and two years; to be 18 to 23 years old; to have limited ongoing conversational contact with native speakers of English; and to be eager to learn and interact. The researcher would contact the ESL Program at the College for this information where possible. (In all of this, the researcher understood that he would have to prioritize his target criteria according to the actual students available to him.)

The researcher hoped to obtain a list of six to eight possible participants. If there were a sufficient number of potential research subjects, the researcher would attempt to select the actual test subjects from the ESL classes of only one or two different instructors. This would help to limit the degree to which differing classroom experiences might skew the study's results. The researcher would then contact these teachers, briefly explain the study project to them, and ask them to keep on file a copy of their students' "first day writing" assignments. After this, the researcher would ask the students themselves to participate in the project. He would tell them (briefly) how they were selected for the study and the purpose of the study, but he would not reveal to them the exact nature of the research being done. He would only tell them that he was studying the development of English language skills, and would give no further details of the research objectives so as not to create bias among the students. He would also tell the students that the research work would have no bearing upon their classroom grade. He would give them a release form to sign, written in simple English. Any parts of the form that they did not find clear the researcher would verbally explain to them. (See Appendix F for a copy of the release form.)

The researcher would state that all the information gathered in this study would remain strictly confidential.

After this, the researcher planned to ask the students to answer some open-ended questions concerning their contact with conversational English, focusing on when, where and how often they currently had opportunity to hear or use English outside of the classroom. (See Appendix E for a copy of this questionnaire.) The goal in all of this would be to ascertain whether or not the students had regular contact with native speakers of English, in what context, and to what extent. On the basis of their answers, the researcher would either select or eliminate students as participants in the project.

Data Collection.

Once the researcher had settled upon the complete set of six to eight test subjects, he would randomly divide the students into two test groups. Group A would have no ongoing contact with the researcher. At the end of the four-week test period, they would complete an in-class writing assignment as a final test of their written skills, which an outside source would compare with their "first day writing" essays. (The question used for this second essay would parallel but not repeat that used for each student's "first day writing" essay.) The researcher planned to administer a second survey to the students with questions concerning their contact with conversational English. It would be similar (if not identical) to the one given at the start of the test period. This would provide an indication of whether their contact with conversational English had changed during the time period of the study.

The researcher planned to give Group B the same series of tests and questions as those given to the members of group A. However, during the four week period of the study, the students in group B would meet individually with a native speaker of English (i.e., the researcher) once each week for about an hour of informal English-language conversation. The researcher would emphasize certain communicative styles subtly during these conversations. (For more details, see below.) He might draw topics for discussion from the course work and text book(s) used in their ESL classes, this to be decided by him upon examination of the texts. With the

students' permission, the researcher would tape record his conversations with the students, since this would enable him to converse more naturally while meeting with them, in addition to providing richer and more accurate data for his subsequent analysis. At the end of the four week test period, an outside source would compare each student's early and later writing samples.

Regarding the targeted communicative areas, in the conversations with students the researcher would seek both to model and to elicit from the students certain patterns of speech. For example, he would seek to model the use of the past tense, speaking in complete thoughts, and staying on subject. The researcher would look for signs of these patterns of communication in students' subsequent writings. He would seek to be subtle in addressing these "key issues," keeping the conversation natural and guarding against what is sometimes referred to as "teacher talk." Rather, he would attempt to maintain a natural conversational style and grammatical level throughout his interactions with the research subjects.

Data Analysis

The proposed method for analyzing all of the students was as follows. The two writing samples obtained from each student would be compared in a blind analysis by someone other than the researcher. The researcher would ask the evaluator to describe features of each student's writing which had changed, and strengths and weakness that could be observed. Ultimately, the researcher would have obtained the following data for each student: a "first day writing" essay; a subsequent writing sample; an outside evaluator's assessment of these essays; the student's pre- and post-study questionnaires regarding their contact with native speakers of English; and the tape recordings of the conversations with the students. The researcher's primary focus in analyzing these data would be to look at the blind analysis assessment of the two writing samples; he would look at other data elements in order to help explain any changes (or lack of changes) in the student's writing. Of course, the researcher expected some progress in writing to occur in each of the students due to their attendance of ESL classes. The researcher hoped, however, that a greater degree of improvement would be found among the students in group B (those with

whom he would have met regularly for the test period), and especially that there would have been improvement in the specific targeted communicative areas.

Methodology

Identifying an Instructor.

In early December 1996, the researcher sent copies of a letter to teachers of ESL Level Two (of four levels) at the college used in this study. The letter briefly described his thesis project and asked the instructors to recommend students who might be suitable subjects for this research work. Specifically, the letter asked for the names of students who were currently writing at Level Two (i.e., successful completion of the course, with advancement to ESL Level Three of Four); and were probably willing to take part in such a project. (For a copy of this letter see Appendix C.) A follow-up letter was sent in January 1997 reminding the instructors of the earlier letter and asking them again if possible to recommend names of potential student participants. (See Appendix D.) From these contacts the researcher obtained the names of 12 students. Upon examination of the class rosters for ESL Level Three, he found that these 12 students were scattered among a number of different classes, with two or three students in some class sections and one or two in others. The researcher approached the instructors of these classes and found one of them to be very interested in this research work. Since teacher cooperation was essential to the successful completion of this project, the researcher decided to recruit students exclusively from this instructor's class section.

Recruiting the Students.

At the instructor's suggestion, the researcher attended one meeting of her class. The instructor allowed the researcher to meet the class and to teach a brief lesson on past tense verb forms in English. She also allowed the researcher to describe briefly his research project and to ask interested students to sign their names and telephone numbers on a list. The researcher subsequently went to the college's ESL Office and reviewed student records to identify those who had been in the United States for between six months and two years. He contacted three of these students (chosen at random) and set up appointments to meet individually with them. Three other students from the class (also chosen at random) were asked to participate as control subjects. These three students agreed, signed consent forms, and answered questions about their contact

with the English language. (See Appendices E and F for copies of these forms.) A fourth student was initially pursued as an additional research participant, but the researcher never successfully made contact with him. After several such unsuccessful attempts, the researcher dropped this student as a possible test subject, leaving three study participants.

Recruiting Additional Students.

The initial meetings with the three students being studied proved difficult for several reasons. (For a discussion of these reasons, see "Data Analysis.") In fact, one of the three students never actually participated in the research and eventually chose to drop out of the project completely. With the number of study participants seeming tenuously low at two active and one inactive, the researcher decided to recruit further students from a second ESL Level-Three class, taught by a different instructor. (A second class was used because of the fact that all the willing and suitable participants from the first class had already been recruited. A new instructor was selected because the teacher from the first class was teaching only one section of ESL Level Three.) From this second ESL Level-Three class the researcher recruited two more test subjects. Three additional controls also consented to take part in the research project. Upon subsequently meeting with the two new participants, the researcher found that one of them had been in the United States repeatedly over the course of the previous ten years (although his records did not make this fact clear) and was therefore not suitable for this research project. By the time all these matters had been settled, it was already more than one month into the semester. The researcher therefore decided to work with the four (subsequently three) remaining students. Meetings with each of the participants varied greatly.

Descriptions of the Students.

This study involved five student subjects, three of whom participated in the project fully and two of whom did not. There were also three student control subjects. For the purposes of confidentiality, the five test subjects will be referred to in this report as "R," "U," "L," "E," and "B." The controls will be labeled "C-1," "C-2," and "C-3." Since students U and B were not ultimately used in this study, they will not be described in any detail here.

Student R is male and a native of Haiti, where he completed high school. He immigrated to the United States with his family about two years before the start of this project. He is in his early 20s.

Student L, also male, arrived in the United States slightly more than two years before the start of this project. He emigrated with his family from the Ukraine, where he completed high school. Most of his schooling took place under the Soviet regime when the Ukraine was still a part of the U.S.S.R. Student L is in his early 20s.

Student E emigrated from Cuba to the United States slightly more than one year before the start of this study. His father had been in the United States for a number of years prior to this; his mother and other family members remain in Cuba. E is approximately 20 years old. He completed high school in Cuba.

Because little contact occurred between the researcher and the control subjects, less is known about their backgrounds. All of them graduated from foreign high schools. All had been in the United States for one to two years. C-1 is a female, a native of Peru. C-2, a male, is from Spanish-speaking Latin America; C-3, a male, is from Cameroon. All three are approximately 20 years of age.

Meeting with the Students.

The researcher met once with each of the two participants who ultimately failed to take part in the full study. (As was stated earlier, one of these two was turned down for participation in this research due to the length of time he had previously spent in the United States; the other dropped out by her own choice after about a month of failed and canceled appointments.) The researcher met three, four, and five times with each of the three remaining study subjects, respectively. Although the original plan was to meet with each student on a weekly basis for one hour each week over the course of four weeks, the actual meetings occurred far less regularly than that. Sometimes a student canceled his appointment with the researcher. Once a student simply failed to show up. (He had missed his bus and caught a subsequent one, but arrived too

late for the meeting to be held.) At other times students asked to reschedule meetings because of class or job responsibilities. To see the actual frequency of the meetings, see Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Meetings Held Between Research Subjects and the Researcher

Student	2/2-8	2/9-15	2/16-22	2/23-3/1	3/2-8	3/9-15	3/16-22	3/23-29	3/30-4/5	4/6-12
R	*M*	N.S.	*M*	*M*	CAN.	S.B.	*M*	X	*M*	
U	*M*	CAN.	N.S.	X	END					
L	*M*	*M*	CAN.	X	CAN.	S.B.	CAN.	*M*		
E		*M*	*M*	X	*M*	S.B.	X	X	X	*M*
B			END							

Key:
CAN. = canceled by student (in advance)
END = final meeting
M = meeting held
N.S. = no show (by student)
S.B. = Spring Break
X = no appointment made (due to prior commitments)

The exact nature of the meetings with students was somewhat shaped by the character and interests of the students themselves.

Student R frequently brought his school work to these sessions, and so meetings between the researcher and R largely focused on school related matters. (See "Data Analysis" for specific details regarding these things.) Unfortunately, R refused to allow his meetings with the researcher to be tape recorded, and so only the notes which the researcher wrote down after each session remain from these meetings.

During the one meeting held between the researcher and student U, she completed the consent forms and the English usage questionnaire. (See Appendices E and F for samples of these forms.) However, no real conversation occurred. Although subsequent meetings were scheduled between the researcher and U, no such meetings ever actually took place because the student repeatedly failed to show up for them.

After the researcher's first meetings with R and with U, he spent some time considering what improvements could be made for his initial meetings with students L, E, and B. Starting with L, the researcher spoke by phone with each student prior to the first meeting, discussing the probability that there would be an initial artificiality to the interaction he and the student would have. The researcher stated that he wanted to make their meetings as meaningful and natural as was possible in spite of this unnatural starting premise and therefore asked them to think of topics or issues they might like to discuss with him.

At his first meeting with the researcher, student L agreed to allow their meetings to be tape recorded. Because of some patterns of communication that arose in this initial meeting, the researcher sought in his second and third meetings with L to create more opportunities for the researcher to speak. (See "Data Analysis" for details of these patterns.) The researcher also asked L to be sure to allow for balanced interaction, explaining that he not only wanted L to speak to him, but also wanted L to hear the researcher speaking English.

Like L, student E agreed to allow his sessions with the researcher to be tape recorded. All the meetings with E involved a mixture of both free conversation and references to classroom related subjects. For example, E frequently raised issues for discussion that were related to his course work (both ESL and other courses), and so these topics were discussed. He also took notes on things the researcher would say, especially the meanings or pronunciations of words. While the researcher never suggested this tactic, he allowed it to occur. (See "Data Analysis" for a more thorough discussion of the sessions between the researcher and E.)

During the first meeting with student B the researcher learned that B's earlier statement that he had been in the United States for about one year was a description of his most recent visit to the country. B estimated that he had spent five of the past ten years in the United States, coming and going repeatedly during that time. In light of this fact, the researcher thanked B for his willingness to take part in the study but informed him that the number of years that he had spent in the United States made him unsuitable for the purposes of this project.

This meeting with B occurred about one month into the semester. Rather than seek to recruit further study participants, the researcher decided to continue with the four who still remained. Several weeks later, U dropped out of the study. (She had never attended any meeting with the researcher except the initial one at which the project was explained and the consent form was signed.) Thus meetings were held with students R, L, and E for the proposes of this study. The details of these meetings can be found in the "Data Analysis" section of this paper.

Analytical Method

The aim to conduct research involving human subjects presented some challenges to the researcher, challenges in recruiting participants and also in arranging regular, repeated meetings with them. Because of this, it was not possible for him to complete a systematic, orderly series of meetings with students as he had initially planned. Nevertheless, three students were involved in regular conversations with him, and the researcher gathered much valuable data from those sessions. Each student met with the researcher for a different number of times (three, four and five times, respectively), and the nature of each one's meetings varied to some degree. In light of this information, the data analysis will begin with a discussion of each student's writing samples, the researcher seeking to assess what impact, if any, his sessions with the students had on their writing samples.

Writing is a qualitative rather than a quantitative activity. Nevertheless, to analyze writing in terms of numbers and statistics can be of some help both in describing patterns and trends in the work of a single student and also in comparing the strengths and weaknesses of two or more different students. Therefore, an outside observer performed a quantitative analysis of the writing samples of the three research subjects and also of three randomly selected controls. (See Table 6.1 for the results of this analysis.) From this analysis, however, the researcher could not detect clear distinctions between the test subjects and the controls. Therefore, he employed another method in order to analyze the data and discuss the study's implications.

The researcher looked for cross-over effects between speaking and writing in his test subjects. He analyzed each student's writing samples in light of the actual conversations that occurred and looked for cause-effect relationships as well as for patterns or trends that ran parallel between the students' writing and the students' conversational sessions.

In addition, the researcher considered briefly the role that differing classroom experiences might have had on the students involved. (Students R and L were members of one class, while student E was a member of another.)

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data collected in this study, the researcher first had an outside evaluator examine students' writing samples. The evaluator scored the written works of students R, L, and E, as well as those of three randomly selected controls. The evaluator did not know which samples were from controls and which were from study participants. For the results of this evaluation, see Table 6.1.

Implications of the Writing Analysis.

The outside evaluator stated that the writing of C-3 was above level from Sample One onward (i.e., from the start of the semester). Therefore, the researcher chose not to consider the writing samples of C-3 in this data analysis.

The data in the Table 6.1 reveal some interesting patterns among the five remaining writers' works. For students R, L, and C-1, the number of errors per 100 words dropped consistently across the span of the sampling period. Students E and C-2 showed no such trend, with errors per 100 words remaining fairly stable, and even increasing slightly.

The "Subordination Ratio" is the relative number of dependent and independent clauses. Typically, beginning writers have fewer dependent clauses; they express every idea via a simple sentence. Such a writer would typically have a subordination ratio of 1.0 or less. As writing skills develop, writers begin to overuse dependent clauses. Subordination ratios soar to the range of 2.0, 3.0, or even higher. Eventually, as students develop and refine their writing skills, subordination ratios drop, staying in the range of 1.5 to 2.0 for the skillful writer.

With this in mind, the scores in Table 6.1 take on some greater meaning. Student R remained in the second stage of this developmental process, even moving into the range of skillful writing on his midterm sample (Sample Two). Student C-1 showed a similar pattern to that of R, although inversely so. His subordination ratios started in the range of a more skillful writer, drifted into the range of a developing writer, and finally ended the semester firmly in the skillful writer's range. Student L seemed to begin the semester well, but was quite likely in the earliest stage of writing development. As the semester progressed, his writing moved into Stage Two,

Table 6.1. Results of the Analysis of Three Writing Samples from each of Three Study Participants and Three Control Subjects

Student	Sample	Word Count	T-Units	Subordination Ratio	Errors/ 100 Words	Discrete Areas of Improvement (or Weakness) Overall
R	1	220	17	17/7 = 2.4	10	• depth of vocabulary
	2	176	10	10/9 = 1.1	10	• verb agreement
	3	314	20	20/9 = 2.2	6	• transitions
						• tense
L	1	337	27	35/27 = 1.3	9	• singular/plural
	2	171	14	14/4 = 3.5	5	• tense
	3	544	44	44/9 = 4.9	2	• articles
						• use of transitions
						• depth of vocabulary
E	1	289	20	20/5 = 4.0	7	(• weak verbs)
	2	497	45	45/12 = 3.75	7	
	3	509	30	30/5 = 6.0	8	
C-1	1	491	30	30/21 = 1.43	5	• vocabulary
	2	349	27	27/10 = 2.7	2	• verb agreement
	3	499	32	32/28 = 1.1	1	• transitions
C-2	1	281	25	25/12 = 2.1	11	(• consistently simple)
	2	250	22	22/43 = 0.5	12	(• repetitive)
	3	227	12	12/11 = 1.1	12	(• underdeveloped)
C-3	1	281	23	23/7 = 3.3	4	• good writing from
	2	383	28	28/15 = 1.9	7	the start of the
	3	397	34	34/8 = 4.3	6	semester

Key: C - controls
Writing sample 1 - spring semester "first day" writing
Writing sample 2 - spring semester midterm writing
Writing sample 3 - spring semester final writing

with a dramatic increase in his use of dependent clauses relative to his use of independent ones. Such a shift is a reasonable occurrence in the work of a developing writer. All three of these writers showed progress in this area over the course of the research project.

The same cannot be said for Students E or C-2. Student E showed consistent and even progressive overuse of dependent clauses. His writing demonstrated no progress in this area, and in fact seemed to become worse by the end of the semester. By contrast, C-2's writing was described by the examiner as "consistently simple." His lack of complex sentence structures is seen to a degree in his low subordination ratio scores; his lack of growth and progress is seen here, as well.

From these data, then, it is hard for the researcher to draw any broad conclusions. While two test subjects showed marked improvement in their writing over the course of the semester, one did not. In addition, one control subject showed a good level of improvement in his writing abilities. What can account for these differences and variations? Is there any evidence of crossover or parallel effects between the writing and the conversational sessions of students R, L and E?

Discussion begins with this question: Can any crossover or parallel effects be observed in the writing samples of the three test subjects?

Parallel Effects Between Speaking and Writing--Transition Usage

Student L's use of transitions is one such point of parallelism. Table 6.2 shows the results of a count of transitions used by L in three randomly selected ten-minute long speaking samples from the middle portions of each of his three conversations.

Table 6.2. Use of Transitions in Randomly Selected Medial Ten-Minute Sections of Speech by Student L

Session Date	Total Number of Transitions Used	Transitions Used Per Minute	Number of Different Transitions Used
2/6/97	12	1.2	4
2/13/97	16	1.6	10
3/27/97	23	2.3	18

A comparison of Tables 6.1 and 6.2 shows clearly that the increased use of transitions in L's writing corresponded to a marked increase in both the frequency and variety of their usage in his speech. In the February 6 sample the researcher noted spoken use of only four transitions: "for example," "OK," "so," and "and." In the February 13 sample L used more than twice that number of different transitions, including the more complex "of course," "let me give an example," "and so" (combining two transitions previously used only individually), and "and because of." By March 27 the variety of L's usage had nearly doubled again; in addition, his frequency of usage was nearly twice that of the February 6 sample. In this final sample, L used such complex transitions as "in order to," "I'll give you an example," "let's say if," "my opinion is," and (the ungrammatical but still noteworthy) "one is...second is."

Parallel Effects--Verb Usage.

The researcher also performed a study of verb usage in random ten-minute selections from the middle portions of the conversations with student L. See Table 6.3 for these results.

Table 6.3. Use of Verbs in Randomly Selected Medial Ten-Minute Sections of Speech by Student L

	Present Tense			Past Tense			Other Tenses			Overall Ratio
Session Date	OK	NG	Ratio	OK	NG	Ratio	OK	NG	Ratio	Correct/Incorrect
2/6/97	17	6	2.8	21	7	3.0	0	3	0	2.4
2/13/97	10	5	2.0	20	3	6.7	7	4	1.8	3.1
3/27/97	28	7	4.0	8	0	**	5	0	**	5.6

Key: OK - correct usage
NG - Not Good (incorrect usage)
** - incalculable (mathematically infinite)
Ratio - OK value / NG value
Other Tenses - future, perfective

A comparison of Tables 6.1 and 6.3 reveals that L's usage of verbs improved over the course of the study both in his speaking and in his writing. This is most readily seen in a comparison of the overall ratio of correct/incorrect verb usage. However, it can also be seen in the "mathematically infinite" (i.e., perfect) scores of L in his use of the past and "other" (future, perfect) tenses during the March 27 session. Only his usage of present tense verbs showed a

failure to improve steadily, and this was largely due to variations in L's use of present tense structures involving copula "be." Student L frequently failed to use any form of the verb "to be" in his sentences, and on February 13 this resulted in such statements as "he just unable to explain," "my name [L]," and "he perfect as a psychologist." The limited number of present tense verbs used in this particular sample and the relatively high proportion of these that called for copula "be" may account for the dip in L's present tense usage ratio for February 13.

Verb Usage and Student E.

The researcher performed a similar study of verb usage for student E. See Table 6.4 for these results.

Table 6.4. Use of Verbs in Randomly Selected Medial Ten-Minute Sections of Speech by Student E

Session Date	Simple Present Correctly Used	Simple Present Incorrectly Used	Other Tenses Correctly Used	Ratio of Usage Correct/Incorrect
2/14/97	12	11	1	1.2
2/21/97	20	3	3	8.6
3/7/97	15	13	5	1.5
4/11/97	12	7	6	2.6

These selections clearly demonstrate the weak verb usage of E. Particularly on February 14 and March 7, when the discussion repeatedly called for the use of non-present tense verbs, E's trouble with verb usage is clear. In general, E used the base form of verbs in many or most situations. (Because of this fact, verbs were not categorized as extensively here as they were in Table 6.3.) His usage was not consistent, either. On February 14, for example, E said (within moments of each other), "a person who wants to teach have to," and "the person who want to teach." Other similar examples were found in the February 14 selection of failure both to use the third person singular marker ("he listen," "he speak," "he write") and also to use auxiliary verbs where the context clearly called for them, ("they ask you" as a future tense verb indicator).

Although E's trouble with verbs was most pronounced in the February 14 sample, none of the other sessions was dramatically better. The one exception to this pattern occurred on February 21; however, this fact is probably due more to the topics discussed in the session than to

anything else. Present tense verbs were appropriate throughout most of this randomly chosen ten-minute section of speech.

There are other instances of E using the incorrect verb form during the March 17 session. Some examples of this are: "in two more years the law gonna change," "I working hard," "are deciding" (for "have decided"), failure to use "do" in negative sentences, "it came to" (for "it comes to"), and the attempt at self-correction, "he had, have, has--he have." Similarly, from the April 11 session there is: "I think" (for "I thought"), "you listen" (for "you listened"), "the person who have," "my boss have," "he make" (for "he made"), "it support" (for "it supported"), failure to use auxiliary "be," and the hypercorrection, "people thinks." Although a cause and effect pattern cannot be claimed here, there is nonetheless a clear parallel between E's spoken and written English. His weakness in the use of verbs is clearly characteristic of both his speech and his writing.

Parallel Effects and Student R.

The researcher did not tape record his sessions with student R (at R's request). However, the researcher did write notes after each session, and from these one can see some parallel patterns between speaking and writing. For example, after their February 3 meeting, the researcher notes, "[R's] use of the past tense is spotty. In some instances he used it well, but in many others, he described everything in the present tense. For example, 'She say me I should try pharmaceutical sales,' for 'She told me I should try....' 'They leave me there,' for 'They left me there.'" The researcher goes on to note three areas in which R expressed an interest for help: "1) synonyms and an expanded vocabulary; 2) the use of commas, periods and quotation marks; 3) the use of the past tense." Such comments were typical of student R. He generally treated his meetings with the researcher as tutoring sessions, bringing his class work with him and asking the researcher specific questions. In fact, during the final session between R and the researcher, R commented that he had expected the sessions to be more structured, following a set program and directly addressing topics related to speaking and writing from his ESL class. R did not respond to any of the researcher's attempts at friendly conversation. "[R] does not foster conversation,"

the researcher wrote. "He merely answers my questions of him." On another occasion, the researcher noted, "[This was] not a good conversation. [It was merely] a 25 minute tutoring session."

During the researcher's second session with R, the student brought a list of nearly 100 terms from his Western Civilization class. He needed to know about all of them for an upcoming test and so the researcher spent the entire session explaining any of the terms, names, and events that he could. "I am sure I used lots of past tense forms," the researcher wrote in his notes. "The pressure of time kept me from carefully enunciating, etc. It was a very real conversation [in terms of the pace of speaking]." The researcher spent most of his third conversational session with R discussing the proper use of commas, quotation marks, and who/whose/whom; and spent most of the fourth session going over the use of footnotes.

Again, although one cannot clearly identify cause and effect here, it is striking that two of R's areas of concern (use of the past tense, and expanded vocabulary) were two of the areas which the evaluator had noted as "improved" in his writing. In R's closing interview session, he said that the sessions had encouraged him to know more vocabulary, largely due to having listened to the ease with which the researcher expressed himself in their times together. When one considers R's apparent attitude toward the sessions ("a free, ask a question tutoring session," according to the notes of the researcher), this takes on an even greater import. He wanted to improve in specific linguistic areas; he treated the conversational meetings like tutoring sessions; he brought questions to them and focused his talks with the researcher almost exclusively on academic topics. All of these factors seem to indicate that R's attitude toward the conversational sessions may well have contributed to their impact on his writing and learning in general.

Student Objectives and Research Outcome

What about the other students? How might their expectations have had an impact on the way the conversational sessions affected them? For L, the sessions seemed to be a chance merely to speak to (more so than with) an American. He came with some topics in mind right from the start (e.g., the O.J. Simpson trial and horoscopes in his first meeting with the researcher) and was

never at a loss for words. "[L] was extremely talkative," the researcher noted after their February 6 session. After their February 13 meeting, the researcher wrote, "[L] likes to talk. I have said (in several ways) that I want him to hear me talk; but he just arrives speaking." These comments give a good indication of the overall attitude of L toward the meetings. Verbal production was his apparent goal; self-correction, when it occurred, seemed to be a distant second in his concerns. Likewise, seeking correction from the researcher seemed only to be of passing interest to him. L's primary objective was to express himself--and occasionally to hear the ideas of the researcher. As academic as the sessions with R were, the meetings between the researcher and L were almost purely social.

Meetings with E seemed to be somewhat of a hybrid of these two. In his final session with the researcher, E made the comment that while he had entered the research project expecting a highly academic experience, he left feeling that he had found a friend. E frequently shifted between these two states: he often turned sessions involving such things as completing a research related questionnaire into 90-minute-long tangent-filled conversations; yet he also often stopped friendly communicative interaction to take notes on the spelling, definition, or pronunciation of a particular word. E sought to have both a friend and a tutor. Could this duality ultimately have led him to get not quite either? Perhaps the focused nature of R (on academic instruction) and of L (on social interaction) provided more helpful input than the social-academic mix favored by E. Certainly E showed far less change in his writing than did either L or R.

Another Variable.

There remains the possibility that the differing degrees of progress among the students analyzed here is due to their having been members of two different ESL Level-Three writing classes. E and C-3 (whose results were not considered) were members of one class; R, L, C-1 and C-2 were members of another. Differences in teaching styles as well as differences in the learning styles of the students involved might well have played some role in the varied progress (or lack of progress) of the students involved in this research.

Unfortunately, the nature of the data gathered in this study does not lend itself to an accurate evaluation of such matters.

Conclusions

In considering the results of this research, there is an apparent connection between progress in speaking and progress in writing. In all three of the test subjects there are elements of parallelism between their spoken and written patterns. What exactly is the nature of such parallels? Does written development foster spoken improvement? Does progress in speaking aid in the development of writing ability? Are speaking and writing complementary areas of change, or is there a synergistic effect whereby development of the two areas together produces a greater effect than growth in either area in isolation?

Implications of the Study.

The results of this study do not permit accurate answers to such questions, although these concepts hold great import for the teaching of both writing and conversation in ESL. The careful observer, however, can see from the results of this study that there is a parallel effect between writing and speaking. A student's progress (or lack of progress) in one area is strikingly mirrored by his progress (or lack of progress) in the other. This raises the question of whether a focus on improving language skills in one such area might bring about improvement in the other area as well. Investigators need to do further research into this matter. They might also look into the question of cause and effect: Do these parallel areas of improvement push one another, and if so, is one of them necessarily the cause and the other the effect--or is there instead a complementary relationship between them? The researcher cannot answer such questions from the data gathered in this study. Nevertheless, the results of this study do hint at such connections and raise them as matters for others to investigate further.

Inferences Regarding the Role of Relationship.

A second area of interest arising from this study is the role of social relationships in learning. Student R treated his interactions with the researcher as somewhat formal, academic, language-learning sessions, while student L made almost no apparent attempts to incorporate formal learning into his conversational sessions with the researcher. By contrast to both of these, student E's conversational sessions were a continuous mix of both social and academic

interactions. While the brief and limited nature of this research makes it difficult to draw any strong conclusions regarding these matters, it does raise the question of whether or not a student's attitude toward a learning experience can affect his actual learning and, if so, to what extent. Specifically, does more productive learning occur in settings which are either essentially social or essentially academic than in circumstances that seek somehow to blend the two? The answer to this question, unfortunately, is further clouded in this research project by the fact that students R and L were pupils of one ESL instructor in their college writing class, while student E was the pupil of another. A more exclusive sample of test subjects might yield a more easily interpreted set of data to future researchers.

Further Limitations.

In addition to limitations that arose from using students from two different ESL classes, other limiting factors existed within this study. All of the research subjects were male; all were roughly 20 years old. Would younger or older research subjects have reacted differently? Would women have responded as these three young men did? The cultural backgrounds of students R, L, and E must also be considered. Would students from other cultures (for example, East Asian or African students) have responded differently? Would students from a higher socioeconomic background have displayed the same patterns? (Students R, U, and L were each working full-time to pay for their schooling.) Since these three students were also living with family members, nothing can be concluded about what the effects of this research experiment would have been on students who were not living with family members, and were living either in a dormitory or with an English-speaking family. Nor can anything be said about the type of student who would not volunteer for such a project. Even within this research study, two students who met the research criteria were recruited (student U and her nameless, hard-to-contact classmate) but ultimately failed to take part in the research. Nothing can be known about what impact regular conversational sessions might have had on them or others like them

Conclusion

Regardless of these limiting factors, however, the study as presented here does demonstrate the existence of a linkage between speaking and writing. Since these two activities are both language producing acts, such a connection seems quite reasonable. Only further research will reveal the exact nature of such a connection; and this understanding will greatly aid all those who desire to teach the English language to non-native speakers.

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APPENDIX A

THE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM

[redacted]

Director:
Assistant Director:
Bilingual Advisor:
Secretary:

[redacted]

PHILOSOPHY

Situated in the Department of English, the ESL Program at [redacted] prepares second language speakers who are admitted to the College for their academic studies. Students may enroll in regular courses while participating in the our ESL Program.

TESTING - PLACEMENT - REGISTRATION

We begin by testing all incoming second language speaking students, both freshmen and transfers, to place them at the appropriate skill level to perform successfully at the College. We base their placement on the results of the written essay, the reading test, and the oral interview. All students then receive Letters of Advisement indicating which ESL courses they need to take. Students must obtain petitions from us before registering for their ESL courses.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Our courses fall into three categories: core level, reading/vocabulary enrichment, and oral skills. Students must take the core level courses in sequence, beginning with the level we indicate in the Letter of Advisement. The courses are as follows:

ESL [redacted]	English as a Second Language I
ESL [redacted]	English as a Second Language II - satisfies ENG [redacted] requirement
ENG [redacted]	Writing in English I - (6 credits) - satisfies ENG [redacted] requirement
ENG [redacted]	Writing in English II -(6 credits) - satisfies ENG [redacted] requirement
ENG [redacted]	Investigative Skills - (3 credits) - satisfies GE [redacted] requirement
ENG [redacted]	Landmarks in World Literature - (3 credits)

Placement in the reading/vocabulary courses is based on the results of the reading exam.

ESL [redacted]	Vocabulary Development I - satisfies CS [redacted] requirement
ESL [redacted]	Vocabulary Development II - satisfies CS [redacted] requirement

Oral skills courses are optional. However, we strongly recommend that students take advantage of the opportunity to improve their presentation skills with us at [redacted]

ESL [redacted]	Pronunciation I	ESL [redacted]	Listening Skills I
ESL [redacted]	Pronunciation II	ESL [redacted]	Listening Skills II
ESL [redacted]	Conversation		

ESL COMPUTER LABORATORY

We are equipped with a new, multi-media laboratory classroom with access to e-mail and Internet.

TUTORING COMPONENT

Over 450 students in our Program receive individual tutoring each week outside of class from a trained tutor who attends the core level course along with the student. This unusual opportunity is available at no cost to the student.

COUNSELING

Our Program takes pride in carefully following the academic paths of each of our students. Our Bilingual Advisor, as well as the Director and the Assistant Director, is equipped to offer emotional as well as academic support and to meet with students who seek/need help outside the classroom.

ESL CLUB

We encourage students to become actively involved in our ESL Club which publishes a yearly student-run literary magazine, [redacted], as well as offers exciting field trips each fall and spring semester. Joining the ESL Club gives students the chance to make friends, practice English, and become an integral part of the [redacted] community.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX B

To: [redacted]
From: [redacted], Assistant Director, ESL Program
Date: November 15, 1996
RE: Fall 1996 ESL Program Statistics

ESL PROGRAM STATISTICS - FALL 1996

	Count	Percentage
TOTAL STUDENTS	541	100%
HISPANIC STUDENTS	372	69%
NON-HISPANIC STUDENTS	169	31%
U.S. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	231	
FOREIGN HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	257	
PUERTO RICO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	16	
GED	29	

Attached are the student enrollment figures for the English as a Second Language Program for Fall 1996. The figures indicate the following:

- The trend toward increased enrollment continues with a growth rate of almost 33% since Fall 1993. Despite the growth in the Program, the Hispanic population continues to drop slightly each term, from 74% in Fall 1993 to 69% in Fall 1996.

- Countries that have the highest student representation are:
  1) Colombia
  2) Dominican Republic
  3) Peru

- Colombians account for nearly one-third of our Hispanic population--a 10% increase since Fall 1995. Student population from Cuba has decreased almost 50% since last fall.

- Although representing a small portion of our population, students from India have almost doubled since Fall 1995.

- The total student enrollment figure continues to include the ESL students who sought advisement in the ESL Office in order to register for ENG [redacted] sections.

As with last year's figures, we find a discrepancy between the total number of students and the data about high school completion and equivalency. The reason is that some students earned a foreign high school diploma and also completed the GED. Also, some students neglected to complete this particular section of the data card.

COUNTRY		LANGUAGE	COUNT
Afghanistan		Farsi	1
Argentina		Spanish	2
Bangladesh		Banghali	3
Belarus		Russian	1
Bolivia		Spanish	3
Brazil		Portuguese	5
Cameroon		French	1
Chile		Spanish	2
China		Chinese	5
Colombia		Spanish	119
Costa Rica		Spanish	1
Cuba		Spanish	18
Dominican Republic		Spanish	63
Ecuador		Spanish	41
Egypt		Arabic	5
El Salvador		Spanish	18
France		French	2
Great Britain		English	1
Greece		Greek	2
Guatemala		Spanish	4
Haiti	(31)	French	3
		Creole	17
		French/Creole	11
Honduras		Spanish	9
Hong Kong		Chinese	6
India	(23)	Gujarati	15
		Hindi	6
		Malayam	1
		Tamil	1
Iran		Farsi	3
Iraq		Arabic	1
Italy		Italian	1
Japan		Japanese	2
Kenya	(5)	Kikuyu	3
		Kisii	1
		Swahili	1
Korea		Korean	6
Macau		Chinese	1
Malawi		Chichewa	1

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COUNTRY		LANGUAGE	COUNT
Mexico		Spanish	5
Morocco		Arabic	1
Nepal		Nepalese	1
Nicaragua		Spanish	1
Nigeria		Yoruba	1
Palestine		Arabic	2
Peru		Spanish	59
Philippines	(6)	Filipino	3
		Tagalog	3
Poland		Polish	13
Portugal		Portuguese	5
Puerto Rico		Spanish	23
Russia		Russian	9
Slovakia		Slovak	1
South Korea		Korean	1
Spain		Spanish	2
Sweden		Swedish	1
Taiwan	(6)	Chinese	3
		Mandarin	3
Tanzania		Swahili	1
Turkey	(2)	Armenian	1
		Turkish	1
Ukraine	(4)	Russian	2
		Ukrainian	2
United States	(8)	English	1
		Portuguese	3
		Spanish	4
Uruguay		Spanish	2
Vietnam		Vietnamese	1

cc. [redacted]
Admissions Dept.
Alumni Office
EEO
ESL Program Faculty and Staff
Spanish Speaking Program

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APPENDIX C

[redacted] Street, Apt. 2
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
(908) [redacted]
e-mail: [redacted]@turbo.kean.edu
December 3, 1996

Dear

Hello, my name is Tom Sirinides. I am a graduate student at Kean College, studying for my Masters degree in T.E.S.O.L. As part of my degree requirements, I am doing research under Dr. Linda Best. It is she who has recommended that I now contact you.

In my research, I plan to study the relationship between exposure to conversational English and improvement in writing abilities. I hope that my investigation of this matter will prove to be of benefit to the program [redacted], and perhaps to other E.S.L. programs as well.

I am writing to you now to ask for your help. You have taught ESL [redacted] this fall, and are thus well able to assess the writing abilities of your current students. During the spring semester I hope to conduct my research using ESL [redacted] students. It would be of great help to me and to this project if you could recommend several of your current [redacted] students to me. I am *not* asking you to do extensive screening; I will take care of that during the winter break. What I *am* asking you to do is to think through the roster of students in your current classes and recommend three or four (or more) of them to me. Specifically, I am interested in students who (1) are currently writing at the ESL [redacted] level (i.e., who will advance to ESL [redacted]); and (2) might be willing to participate in such a research project. I will screen the names I receive, and will approach selected students at the start of the spring semester. For now, then, there is no need to inform any student of his or her having been recommended to me by you. All I ask is that you send the students' names either to me (at the above street address, e-mail or phone number) or to Dr. Best (in the English department, or via e-mail: [redacted]@turbo.kean.edu). Please send either one of us this information by January 6, if at all possible.

I know that this is a very busy time of year for everyone. Please do take a few minutes now, though, to respond to this letter.

Thank you for your time and assistance with this project.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas Sirinides

APPENDIX D

[redacted] Street, Apt. 2
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
(908) [redacted]
e-mail: [redacted]@turbo.kean.edu
January 13, 1997

Dear

Hello, my name is Tom Sirinides. I had written to you a month ago, asking briefly for your help. I am a graduate student at Kean College, studying for my Masters degree in T.E.S.O.L., and as a part of my masters research, I hope to work with some students from [redacted]. My research has been approved by [redacted], E.S.L. program director. You may contact her if you have any questions about me or my work.

You may recall that I wrote to you previously because you taught ESL [redacted] this past fall. I had asked you to recommend some of your students to me for my research work, students who have completed ESL [redacted] will advance to ESL [redacted] and might be willing to participate in my research project. I will screen the names I receive (for a few criteria I have), and will approach the selected students early in the spring semester. All I ask of you now is that you send the students' names either to me (at the above street address, e-mail or phone number) or to Dr. Linda Best, my research advisor (in the English department, or via e-mail: [redacted]@turbo.kean.edu). Please send either one of us this information as soon as possible.

I know that this is a very busy time of year for everyone. Thank you for your prompt assistance with this project.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas Sirinides

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APPENDIX E

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

When did you arrive in the U.S.A.?_____ Date of Birth: _____

1. How often do you use English outside of the classroom?

____ almost never
____ not every week, but once in a while
____ 1 or 2 times a week
____ 3 or 4 times a week
____ 5 or more times a week
____ many times each day, every day of the week

2. Who are the people that you speak to when you speak English?
(Please list *all* possible answers.)

3. Outside of class time, where are you when you speak English?
(Please list *all* possible answers.)

4. Was there another time in your life when you often used English? If so, when was that, and with whom did you speak? (Please list *all* possible answers.)

APPENDIX F

I agree to take part in the master's research project of Tom Sirinides.

1. I give my permission for Tom and/or those working with him to examine samples of my writing.

2. I will honestly answer his questions regarding when and how often I hear or use spoken English.

3. I will meet with him for one hour each week during the four week period of his research.

4. I will allow these conversations to be tape recorded.

5. I understand that all of these things (the writing samples, the answers to the questions, the conversations, and the tape recordings) will be kept confidential. Only someone directly connected to this research will be allowed to see or hear any of these things.

6. My participation in this research will not affect my grade in ESL [redacted], except that the writing samples used may be taken from among those that would have been graded in the ESL [redacted] classroom anyway.

7. I have agreed to participate in this project of my own free will.

Signed: _____

Name (printed): _____

Date: _____

I agree to take part in the master's research project of Tom Sirinides.

1. I give my permission for Tom and/or those working with him to examine samples of my writing.

2. I will honestly answer his questions regarding when and how often I hear or use spoken English.

3. I understand that my writing samples and my answers to his questions will be kept confidential. Only someone directly connected to this research will be allowed to see or hear any of these things.

4. My participation in this research will not affect my grade in ESL [redacted], except that the writing samples used may be taken from among those that would have been graded in the ESL [redacted] classroom anyway.

5. I have agreed to participate in this project of my own free will.

Signed: _____

Name (printed): _____

Date: _____